GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:251
ANSWERED ON:11.05.2016
Nuclear Threat Initiatives
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Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a)the safety ranking of India"s nuclear power stations globally;

(b)whether the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a non-Governmental group based in Washington has pegged India"s nuclear security practices at 23rd rank among 25 countries;

(c)if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d)whether the Government has constituted any team to study safety of nuclear power stations and nuclear material; and

(e)if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government for the safety of nuclear stations and materials in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR, PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER"S OFFICE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH):

(a)Government is not aware of any such global safety rankings of nuclear power stations.

(b) & (c) In 2016, the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), came out with another edition of an Index that it claims, assesses 24 countries with one kilogram or more of weapons-usable nuclear material on their contributions towards improved nuclear materials security. India was placed at the 21st position on this Index. The Government of India does not agree with the methodology adopted by the NTI, a non-Governmental organization.

(d)Post Fukushima, the safety of Indian nuclear power plants against natural calamities has been independently reviewed by three Indian organisations and based on their reports, adequate safety measures have been implemented.
As regards security of nuclear material, in order to devise a coordinated multi-agency approach to deal with the threat of individuals or group of individuals acquiring nuclear or radioactive material for malicious purposes, India has set up at the national level an institutional mechanism called a Counter Nuclear Smuggling Team. The team has representation from concerned Ministries/ Departments/Agencies of the Government and meets regularly. It also conducts table top exercises for effective and coordinated response to threats involving use of nuclear and radioactive material for malicious purposes.

(e) For the safety of nuclear power plants, right at the design stage itself, rigorous review of safety precautions to be taken are assessed and safety measures are incorporated. In addition, AERB while renewing licenses for nuclear power plants periodically assesses the implementation of safety features and operational safety associated within the nuclear power plants.

With regard to Security of nuclear materials, India is a party to the International Atomic Energy Agency"s (IAEA) Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), its 2005 Amendment and International Convention on Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT). India"s national implementation of physical protection measures for nuclear materials and facilities takes into account the guidance contained in IAEA"s Nuclear Security Series documents. Further, to ensure adherence to the regulatory requirements, India"s Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) has developed a number of guideline documents for regulation of (i) nuclear materials and nuclear facilities and (ii) radiation sources and radiation facilities and also during transport of these materials. India"s export controls list and guidelines have been harmonized with those of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). India fully supports the implementation of UNSC Council Resolution 1540 dealing with measures to prevent terrorists gaining access to Weapons of Mass Destruction.
Institutionally, the security of nuclear and radiological material in India is ensured through robust oversight by AERB, which deploys a large pool of highly trained and specialised manpower for this purpose. At the international front, India has contributed actively to the Nuclear Security Summit process and has pledged a further contribution of US$ 1 million to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund. India has also set up of a Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) for training and capacity building.

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